



## Ridley-Thomas' Select Committee Probes Los Angeles County Health Care Crisis



Assemblymembers Ridley-Thomas (chair) and Cindy Montanez listen intently to witness testimony at a recent Select Committee hearing.

lic with average attendance of 80 to 100 persons.

Listed below are the names of the Assemblymembers Speaker Núñez has appointed to serve on the Select Committee on the Los Angeles County Health Care Crisis:

**Mark Ridley-Thomas**  
(Los Angeles), Chair

**Karen Bass** (Culver City)

**Wilma Chan** (Alameda)

**Hector de la Torre**  
(Southgate)

**Mervyn Dymally** (Compton)

**Dario Frommer** (Glendale)

**Jackie Goldberg**  
(Los Angeles)

**Mike Gordon**  
(Torrance/El Segundo)

**Paul Koretz**  
(West Hollywood)

**Cindy Montañez**  
(San Fernando Valley)

**Keith Richman** (Northridge)

**Sharon Runner** (Lancaster)

Earlier this year, Assembly Speaker Fabian Núñez (D-Los Angeles) appointed Assemblymember Mark Ridley-Thomas (D-Los Angeles) to chair the newly created Assembly Select Committee on the Los Angeles County Health Care Crisis.

The recent problems plaguing the Los Angeles County health care delivery system have been a serious concern for the California Legislature. Several disturbing announcements regarding the operation and viability of both private and public hospitals, and other systemic problems prompted creation of the Assembly Select Committee on the Los Angeles County Health Care Crisis.

"In establishing a Select Com-

mittee to examine the health care crisis that confronts the Los Angeles region, the Speaker recognizes the magnitude of the problem before us," said Ridley-Thomas.

So far, Ridley-Thomas has held three Select Committee hearings. The hearings have focused on: 1) The Origin and Causes of the Crisis (Feb 25); 2) The Financial Aspects of the Crisis (April 1); and 3) The Governance and Management Problems facing the County Health Care System (May 13). A broad range of health care stakeholders have testified at the hearings to help policy makers identify issues and proposals for resolving the problems. All hearings have been open to the pub-

## Ridley-Thomas Calls for Reduction Of Sex Offender Shelters in 48<sup>th</sup> Assembly District



In a letter dated March 4, Assemblymember Mark Ridley-Thomas wrote to Jeanne Woodford, the Director of the California Department of Corrections, asking for an immediate response and resolution to reports that 31 registered sex offenders live at 1932 W. Rochester Circle near the center of Ridley-Thomas' district.

In addition, the 48<sup>th</sup> Assembly District Empowerment Congress (ADEC) embarked upon a community action campaign in which they distributed, collected, and ultimately mailed over 1100 constituent-signed post cards demanding that Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger intervene in the situation as well. The post card drive followed the third in a series of Town Hall meetings discussing the California Department of Corrections' sex offender placement policies.

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## Ridley-Thomas' Colorectal Cancer Fund Bill Passes Assembly

Assemblymember Mark Ridley-Thomas, author of the Colorectal Cancer Fund Act, is joined on the Assembly Floor by oncologist Dr. Timothy Simmons, Philanthropist Erin Stennis, and Actress Jasmine Guy.

also assist in providing early screening for the detection of colorectal cancer.

"Much progress has been made over the past few years in both prevention and treatment of colorectal cancer," said Ridley-Thomas. "Our challenge is to educate Californians about the importance of regular screening, and if they are diagnosed with colorectal cancer, it is equally important that they know about their treatment choices, especially in the African-American community."

"By having the Stennis Family Foundation and the Ameri-

can Cancer Society as supporters of the bill, the funding will aid them in the continuation of research, educational programs and seminars to individuals and families. The funds will also assist in providing a proactive stance towards early screening and detection for colorectal cancer," said Ridley-Thomas.

To view the Stennis Family Foundation website please go to [www.stennis.org](http://www.stennis.org). For the American Cancer Society please go to [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org). To view the text of AB 819, please visit the Assembly's website at [www.assembly.ca.gov](http://www.assembly.ca.gov).

On May 9, legislation authored by Assemblymember Mark Ridley-Thomas (D-Los Angeles) that would give California taxpayers the opportunity to combat colorectal cancer passed off the Assembly floor by a 60-5 vote.

Assembly Bill 821 establishes the California Colorectal Cancer Prevention (CCCCP) Fund. It permits taxpayers to designate

on their tax return an amount of money above their tax liability and transfer the money into the CCCC fund.

The voluntary contributions resulting from the tax form check-off would produce funds that will go towards financing research, prevention and educational programs in the community targeting individuals and families. The funds would



# Legislative Update

**AB 166 Public Health Authority**  
*(Passed Assembly; continues to Senate)*

Creates an independent Authority to act as the governing and administrative body to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and economy of the community health services provided by LA public hospitals, clinics and other medical centers.

**AB 168 CA Tax Expenditure Accountability Act**  
*(Passed Assembly; continues to Senate)*

Requires the Department of Finance and the Office of the Legislative Analysis to review the \$14 billion in corporate credits, exemptions and exclusions to see if they accomplish the economic goals for which they were enacted. These recommendations could allow for new expenditures to create, attract or retain jobs in California.

**AB 899 SEIU Professional Development**  
*(Passed Assembly; continues to Senate)*

Allows professional development training to occur within assigned work hours.

**AB 901 The Uniform Lending Reform Act**  
*(Passed Assembly; continues to Senate)*

Increases the covered loan threshold to provide more protection to a larger population of homeowners. It requires that any licensed person originating 8 or more covered loans in a calendar year to report their activity to their licensing agency. AB 901 requires that the District Attorneys report to the Legislature on an annual basis the progress and effectiveness of the real estate fraud prosecution trust fund.

**AB 925 Insurance Industry Community Investment Act**  
*(2-year Bill)*

Requires the insurance industry to invest a percentage of the money collected in premiums from communities that meet a certain profile for investment in those communities. AB 925 has prompted the industry to provide the Insurance Commissioner with the data to substantiate their claim that they invest in communities already.

**AB 1230 Inspector General**  
*(Passed Assembly; continues to Senate)*

Creates an inspector general position in Los Angeles County to provide an accountability mechanism to ensure that health care services are delivered effectively, efficiently and economically.

**AB 1314 Brown Act**  
*(Passed Assembly Local Government 4-3, placed on Inactive status)*

Exempts neighborhood councils in the City of Los Angeles from the 72-hour meeting notification requirement of the Ralph M. Brown Act (Brown Act).

**AB 1388 Telecommunications Fund for Community Access**  
*(Passed Assembly; continues to Senate)*

Authorizes repayment over a 15 year period to the General Fund from the CA Teleconnect Fund to finance local matching grants for telecommunication access in rural and low-income communities.

## Assemblymember Mark Ridley-Thomas' Statement Regarding the Death of Johnnie L. Cochran, Jr.

Johnnie L. Cochran, Jr. was far more than the extraordinary lawyer who engineered the acquittal of O.J. Simpson. He was extraordinary long before the events in 1995 catapulted him to celebrity status. He was extraordinary about 30 years earlier when he stood up to a slow-to-change, racially polarizing Los Angeles Police Department and fearlessly challenged misconduct and abuse...and prevailed.

Johnnie Cochran didn't just represent the rich and the famous. He personally represented many people whose names will never be recognized for their celebrity - like the middle school girl who was repeatedly sexually assaulted by her math teacher at a LAUSD facility; or the blind man who fell down an uncovered sewer because the L.A. city sanitation worker failed to put the



"manhole" cover back when he completed the job.

Finally, he was very concerned about those who were the victims of predatory lending. And our last effort together was doing the research and making the case for a massive lawsuit to end such an unjust practice.

Extraordinary indeed: kind, supportive, generous, respectful and talented. Johnnie was special. It made no difference whether he was at the Four Seasons in Beverly Hills or Ray's Kitchen in South Los Angeles. He leaves behind a rich legacy of advocacy and service that will long be remembered. He was a role model for at least two generations of lawyers. With the passing of Johnnie Cochran, our country has lost a noble fighter and a great humanitarian.

On behalf of my family, I am deeply saddened by his loss and wish to express my heartfelt sympathy and condolences to his family.

## Connie Watson Honored As The 48th Assembly District's "Woman of the Year"

Assemblymember Mark Ridley-Thomas honored Connie Watson as the 48th District's 'Woman of the Year' for 2005. Ms. Watson was recognized for her commitment to public service during the March 14th Assembly Session in the Chambers of the California State Assembly in Sacramento.

"Connie Watson is an inspirational leader with a long history of service to the districts' families and youngest residents," said Ridley-Thomas. "I am honored to pay tribute to such a talented constituent who has dedicated much of her life to nurturing and providing guidance to the children and families of Los Angeles. Her work and spirit are completely dedicated to her family, the community and the entire city."

Connie Watson has spent over 25 years working in the area of improved mental health and social conditions for children and families in Los Angeles. She is currently the Executive Director of the Los Angeles People Who Care Youth Center. The cen-



48th Assembly District 2005 Woman of the Year Connie Watson is joined on the Assembly floor by Assemblymember Mark Ridley-Thomas.

ter provides counseling, tutoring, parenting education, graffiti abatement, in-home services to prevent child abuse and neglect of young children, and an after-school program that includes tutoring, recreation, and computer lab in a safe and nurturing environment.

Through the years, Ms. Watson has been acknowledged and honored for her service to youth and the community by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, the Violence Prevention Coalition of Greater Los Angeles and Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society. Ms. Watson is a graduate of California State University, Los Angeles. She is the mother of one and grandmother of three.

The "Woman of the Year" ceremony is an annual event held to recognize an exemplary California woman from each Assembly District in the State.

## Sex Offender Shelters in 48th Assembly District

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These meetings yielded ADEC's current three track approach to the sex offender overconcentration problem: 1) Administrative intervention by the Governor; 2) Local government pressure on facilities (code & ordinance enforcement, etc.); and 3) State legislative action to strengthen sex offender management laws.

The following 2005/06 Bills could have a significantly positive impact on the problem of sex offender management in the 48th district, and the entire state of California:

**AB 632 (Chu; co-author: Ridley-Thomas) - Passed Assembly by 79-0 vote; continues to Senate.**

This bill creates a 19-member Sex Offender

Management Board (SOMB) to assess and monitor management practices for adult sex offenders in California. SOMB reports to the Legislature and Governor.

**AB 240 (Bermudez) - Passed Assembly by 76-0 vote; continues to Senate.**

Current state law prohibits certain sex offenders (i.e. child molestation offenders) from residing within 1/4 mile of any public or private school Grades K-8 inclusive. This bill expands that area to within 1/4 mile of schools K-12, thereby offering additional protection to thousands more youth.

Watch for updates on these bills and ADEC activities in our next newsletter.